

Conservancy District Studies Vat Tunnel Bid

DUCHESENE, Utah (UPI) — The Bureau of Reclamation began its review today of a low bid \$4 million above engineer's estimates for the Vat Tunnel of the Central Utah Project.

An earlier report erroneously listed the bid as \$8 million below the engineer's estimate. "The actual estimate.

released at the time of the bid opening was \$22,980,644," explained Larry Belliston, public relations director for the project.

He added the \$35 million reported earlier was a speculative figure which was mistakenly interpreted as the engineer's estimate.

The firm's bid and three other offers were submitted to the bureau of reclamation's Denver office for review.

Formal acceptance is expected about mid-August and work can begin any time after that, said Lynn Ludlow, general manager of the Central Utah Project. The contractor has 1,450 working days.

Dissident Ute Indians, who oppose the tunnel on grounds it would carry water belonging to the tribe to the populated Wasatch Front, have threatened to file suit to block the start of work. But they did not take advantage of a federal court decision which would have blocked the bid opening if they had filed suit.

The official engineer's estimate on the project was \$22.9 million — although the CUP has estimated the total price of the tunnel at \$35 million.

The tunnel will carry water from the West Fork of the Duchesne River to Current Creek Reservoir, located about 20 miles northeast of Strawberry Reservoir.

From Current Creek, which will hold 17,240 acre-feet of water and have a surface of 290 acres, the water will flow to Strawberry through three tunnels which have already been completed.

The water flows from Strawberry down Diamond Fork Canyon, where two hydroelectric plants are planned, and into the Spanish Fork River and Utah Lake.

The beneficiaries will be 100,000 Salt Lake County water users, who will obtain Provo River water in exchange for the new flow into Utah Lake.

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clearing & burn on 40 acres
for timber park -